Citizens Project

Freedom Watch

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THE SUPREME COURT & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court decided four church-state cases, and a Colorado Court ruled on displaying the Ten Commandments. Here are details, some local implications, and one continuing controversy on school prayer.

Tax dollars for a parochial school: Are school vouchers constitutional?

James Zobrest, a deaf student at Salpointe Catholic High School in Tucson, required an interpreter in order to attend his parochial school. His parents wanted a government-paid interpreter under a federal disability law applicable to all handicapped children.

The local public school district refused to pay, arguing that providing a taxpayer-funded interpreter to a parochial school would constitute government aid to a religious institution and would violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. [The Establishment Clause states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion."]

Zobrest sued the school district, and although he graduated from high school in 1992 (having used a private interpreter), his lawsuit has gone forward on the question of whether he should be reimbursed for costs of his interpreter.

In June, the Zobrest case was finally decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court, in a 5-4 decision, held that providing an interpreter was an "indirect aid" that did not violate the Establishment Clause. The beneficiary of this government-paid interpreter, said the Court, was James Zobrest the person, not the parochial school itself. The school benefitted only incidentally.

> "Providing an interpreter was "indirect aid" that did not violate the Establishment Clause."

An interpreter, the Court said, is different from "direct aid" which acts to relieve a parochial school of an "expense that it otherwise would have assumed in educating its students." Any such direct assistance would violate the Constitution. The Court ruled that Zobrest's interpreter did not.

Implication: Could this Supreme Court ruling mean that Colorado's attempted school voucher initiative (aid to private school students—Amendment 8 in last November's election) would be constitutional? According to John Whitehead of the conservative Rutherford Institute, "Under this decision, tuition tax credits or vouchers could be constitutional." Others disagree.

While the Supreme Court indicated that direct financial assistance to parochial schools will continue to be unconstitutional, the opinion did not rule directly on the question of whether voucher aid paid directly to parents or to children, some of whom subsequently chose to attend parochial schools, would be constitutional. The Supreme Court did, however, raise concerns about the constitutionality of laws that "create financial incentive for parents to choose a sectarian school," possibly dooming school voucher amendments.

Of 19 state-wide referenda since 1966 on the question of tax aid for nonpublic schools, 18 out of the 19 have been defeated (South Dakota in 1986 was the exception). Different types of school vouchers are presently in place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and in Puerto Rico, and in November California voters rejected a voucher initiative by a 70-30 margin (see News Briefs, pg 7). Colorado's voucher proponents are currently preparing another ballot initiative for the 1994 election (see News Briefs, pg 7).

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After-School Religion: What about student groups?

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that a New York school was required to rent space to Lamb's Chapel, a church that wanted to show Focus on the Family child-rearing films during non-school hours. The school district had earlier rented its facilities to a variety of community groups, and the Court held that the school could not now refuse to rent its buildings to this group for the purpose of showing these Christian-based child-rearing films.

Interestingly, support for the ruling in this case was widespread. Groups as diverse as the Rutherford Institute and the ACLU filed briefs in support of Lamb's Chapel.

The Lamb's Chapel case involved an outside group who wanted to show quasi-religious films on school property after school hours. Some have hailed this case as a new tool to increase religious presence in public schools. However, this case does not impact public school students, who can already meet for voluntary religious activities during non-instructional time under the Equal Access Act, as upheld by the Supreme Court in 1990.

Implication: The Lamb's Chapel case will have little effect on public school students here in Colorado. Colorado, along with all other states, is covered by the federal Equal Access Act, which means that a school opening its facilities to non-curriculum-related student groups (such as chess clubs or scuba classes) must also allow access for student meetings with religious or quasi-religious content.

Interestingly, Article IX, Section 7, of the Colorado Constitution, which bars use of any taxpayer money for the benefit of sectarian (religious) groups, may bar school districts from allowing use of facilities for religious purposes. A pre-Lamb's Chapel case in Washington state held that the prohibitions in their state constitution (similar to those in Colorado's constitution) would prevail over the federal Equal Access Act. Colorado has never litigated this point.

Prayer at Graduation: Can students vote for prayer?

In November 1991, the U.S. Supreme Court decided an important church-state case, the Weisman case, which held that a member of clergy could not offer invocation and benediction prayers at elementary and secondary school graduation ceremonies. The actions of the school officials in arranging for the prayers endorsed religion and thus violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Further, prayers in graduation ceremonies with captive student audiences were violative of the Establishment Clause.

> "Prayers in graduation ceremonies with captive student audiences were violative of the Establishment Clause."

In a case that has caused considerable controversy, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (which covers Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) attempted to apply the Weisman case to the issue of possible student prayers at graduation ceremonies. This Appeals Court, in the Jones case, held that student volunteers, after a vote of the senior class, could present "nonsectarian, nonproselytizing" graduation prayers for the purposes of "solemnizing" these occasions, and that such prayers would not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The case was then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In June 1993, the Supreme Court declined to hear this appeal, thereby allowing the Court of Appeals ruling to stand. By declining to hear the appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court did not express an opinion on the ruling, and more importantly, the Supreme Court did not affirm that ruling. The holding in the Jones case is now law in only the three states of the Fifth Circuit: Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Some groups argue that the ruling in the Jones case is now law throughout the United States. The conservative organization founded by Pat Robertson, American Center for Law and

Inside CP

❑ **Thank You Sustainers—Our Lifeblood.** An enormous thank you to all who participated in our sustainers program in 1993. Your monthly and semi-annual pledges gave us a funding base we could rely on to publish Freedom Watch, to receive the subscriptions we rely on for research, to pay the phone bill and the other routine expenses to keep the office running.

❑ **On the Airwaves.** Listen for CP directors Amy and Doug on KGFT's "Think Twice," 100.7 on your FM dial from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M. on November 29. Amy and Doug will also brave a possible rug burn when they go "On the Carpet" with Chuck Baker from 2-5 P.M., November 18 on KVOR, AM 1300. So tune your radios, and get your dialing finders ready to call in with moral support and questions.

❑ **More Thanks.** Many of you helped us move the office, and many more helped with our election activities. Thanks to ALL, and an extra special thanks to Dena Samuels, of Graphic Artistry, who donated countless hours working on the layout for the Candidate Survey, and to George Bradford, who coordinated and supervised construction in the new office. Three cheers for many jobs well done!

❑ **Updates.** In January's *Freedom Watch,* we'll give you an update of CP's finances, updated goals, 501(c)3 status, and some exciting news about our board of directors.

Justice (ACLJ), sent school boards nationwide a flyer that stated flatly: "Students have the right to include an invocation and benediction in their graduation exercises." A recent Focus on the Family magazine article says that graduation prayers are "absolutely not illegal" if students initiate them and select the speaker.

> "No doubt the issue of prayer in school and at graduation ceremonies will continue to surface locally."

Unfortunately, such blanket statements ignore the uncertainty about whether student-led graduation prayers will be held to be constitutional in jurisdictions other than the Fifth Circuit. Other judges may well disagree with the Fifth Circuit. In the meantime, schools in other jurisdictions (including Colorado) who allow student-initiated prayer at graduation ceremonies risk the expenses of defending a lawsuit. Court challenges to student-led graduation prayers are now pending in at least four states: Idaho, Florida, New Jersey, and Virginia.

Implication: One state, Tennessee, has taken the Jones case and expanded on it. The Tennessee legislature passed a law in June to allow students to vote for prayer not only in graduation ceremonies, but also in school assemblies throughout the school year. One commentator wryly noted that soon "kindergartners would vote about prayer before their milk and cookies."

The issue came up in Manitou Springs last spring when a majority of the senior class voted for graduation prayers. At the school board meeting called on the matter, a group of pro-prayer students, assisted by a local attorney, asked for prayers at their graduation. Others at the meeting objected to a majority of students forcing their prayer on all students by a vote. The school board ultimately decided not to alter existing school policy on graduation prayers.

No doubt the issue of prayer in school and at graduation ceremonies will continue to surface locally, as groups of parents and students press their attempts to impose prayer on all students, regardless of religious orientations or a lack thereof. Eventually, the U.S. Supreme Court will likely accept a "student" school prayer case and at that time will resolve the uncertainty and dispute in this area.

Calling For Sacrifice: Will we sacrifice religious diversity?

Can a city discriminate against a religion whose doctrines call for animal sacrifices? The Florida city of Hialeah (a Miami suburb) spent $375,000 fighting in court to find out.

The Santeria religion, an Afro-Cuban religion with elements of Roman Catholicism, calls for animal sacrifices, generally chickens, sheep and goats. The city of Hialeah, finding the practice controversial and objectionable, passed ordinances prohibiting ritual animal sacrifices, although pest control, commercial slaughter operations, and sport killing were exempted. The Santerians sued, claiming that the ordinances were discriminatory and violated the free exercise of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment. The ACLU, joined by numerous liberal and conservative groups, assisted the Santerians in their suit.

A unanimous Supreme Court held in this Hialeah case that laws that narrowly target specific religious practices without a compelling government interest violate the First Amendment. Specifically, the Court invalidated Hialeah's animal sacrifice ordinances.

Implication: In the Pikes Peak region, religious diversity is not always respected. For that reason, a unanimous Supreme Court ruling upholding the constitutional right to religious freedom for all is a welcome breath of fresh air. As the Supreme Court stated, "religious beliefs need not be acceptable, logical, consistent, or comprehensible to others in order to merit First Amendment protection."

> "In the Pikes Peak region, religious diversity is not always respected."

The Ten Commandments Are Religious: Should Colorado promote them?

The Colorado Court of Appeals recently heard arguments concerning a stone monument displaying the Ten Commandments, located in a state park near the capitol building in Denver. The monument had been in the park since 1956.

There were two questions: 1) Did the monument convey a religious message, and 2) did the monument also convey the message that the state approved of this religious message?

The monument, by referring to a deity, carried a religious message, as well as stating established ethical or moral principles (such as injunctions against murder, theft, and perjury), the Court said. The Court also noted that the Ten Commandments are "undeniably a religious text" in the Jewish and Christian faiths, and that the first part of the Commandments deals solely with religious duties, rather than secular matters. Given that, the fact that some of the Ten Commandments are part of our legal heritage did not convert a religious message into a secular message. A 1980 U.S. Supreme Court decision had reached the same conclusion.

The Court then analyzed the second issue. The monument would be unconstitutional if: 1) the government's actions intended to approve or disapprove of religion or a particular religion, or 2) the government's actions actually conveyed to a reasonable person an approval or disapproval of religion or a particular religion. The Court held that the location of the monument on state grounds conveys the message that the government endorses the religious message on the monument. Consequently, the monument was deemed unconstitutional under both the U.S. and Colorado constitutions. This case has now been appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court. We will keep you posted.

— Doug Triggs, Esq.

EDITING JESUS: SALVATION & SOCIAL JUSTICE

On November 7th, Campus Crusade for Christ embarked on its Jesus Video Saturation Project. The group hopes to distribute videos door-to-door throughout Colorado Springs detailing the life of Jesus Christ. The video, an edited version of the original two-hour film, has created some concern over the omitted messages of Christ which emphasize social justice and tolerance. Rev. Keith Thompson of Calvary United Methodist Church analyzes these edits, and discusses some of the theological implications.

I was not really all that concerned when I first heard that Campus Crusade for Christ was using the Genesis Project film on Luke. I had seen the film, originally produced by Campus Crusade for Christ, and taped it a number of years ago off T.V. and still have it in my collection. Personally, I was not very impressed with it as a film; yet it seemed to do a fairly balanced job of capturing the main emphases of this Gospel.

However, when I went to one of the weekly gatherings of United Methodist clergy in the area, I discovered that the film has been drastically cut by nearly one-third of its original length. I was curious. What was cut? And, as I began to think about it, how could Campus Crusade use a film about Luke's Gospel for home evangelism when its own theology is so oriented towards John's Gospel and Paul? So I took a copy home to compare it with my original version.

> "The problem is that Campus Crusade is making misleading claims about this project on a number of levels."

What I discovered disturbed me, especially in light of how the film is being marketed. The following letter that I have submitted to the Gazette and to the Independent explains my concerns.

As a United Methodist pastor, I wholeheartedly support Christians witnessing to our faith. It is important to me that other Christians (as well as members of other religions) have the freedom to evangelize according to their own beliefs—even when they differ from mine. However, it is vital that such witnessing be done without misrepresentation. Unfortunately, this effort to saturate the Colorado Springs area with a film about Jesus doesn't, in my opinion, live up to this standard.

Campus Crusade For Christ, a prominent para-church organization, is asking area churches to buy numerous copies of a substantially abridged version of a 1979 Genesis Project film about Jesus and then distribute them to homes in a given area the city free of charge. The problem is that Campus Crusade is making misleading claims about this project on a number of levels. First, some of the promotional materials state or imply that what is being distributed is the 1979 full-length film. This is not the case. It is rather one that has been shortened by fully one-third.

Second, the promotional video calls it "the" Jesus film and asks potential sponsors, "Will you help take Jesus to your community?" However, the original film was only meant to capture the basic outline of Jesus as the Gospel of Luke presents him—something much more limited.

No film based on a single Gospel can claim to represent faithfully the Jesus of the Bible, because there are quite different presentations of him there. The Genesis Project acknowledges this at the very beginning of the original film in this way: "Four Gospels record the humble beginnings of the Christian Faith, and while the other Gospels tell of some other events, or even the same events somewhat differently... this is His story taken entirely from the Gospel of Luke". It is significant that Campus Crusade chose to cut this statement from its shortened version. This obscures the fact that the film's creators never intended to present a biblically complete (or even essential) Jesus.

Finally, and most important, the promotional video requests that people "help place the Gospel of Luke in the homes in your area" by taking this film. However, from my perspective, the film will place something quite different in those homes—namely, selected parts of Luke that reflect Campus Crusade's particular interpretation of the essential Jesus.

Of course, the most that even a full-length film can hope for is to do justice to the major themes and the spirit of a Gospel. In this regard, even the original film—which did a fairly good job of this—still left much to be desired. However, Campus Crusade's highly selective cuts have, in my opinion, greatly diluted one of the Gospel's major themes. The cuts take the "socially" prophetic bite out of its representation of Jesus, e.g., teachings that challenge the unjust use of political power (Luke 4:16-24, 28-30) and any society where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer (6:24-26; 12:33-34) and any effort to make the family into an idol (8:19-21). In doing so it risks losing this Gospel's prominent emphasis on a Jesus who radically challenges social injustice as well as individual immorality, a Jesus for whom charity for victims is not enough for those who would be his followers. Hence, this severely chopped-up version of the film is open to the charge that it represents a distorted, tamed picture of Jesus when compared either with the original film or the written Gospel.

It is fair to say that this film faithfully represents Campus Crusade's basic image of Jesus. However, in my opinion, that is a far cry from being faithful even to the spirit of Luke's Gospel, much less to the wider biblical presentations of Jesus. The question that needs to be answered by those who would use this film for evangelism is: "Will commitments for Christ obtained in this way really be for the Jesus of Luke and/or the Bible? As for those of you who see this film, I urge you to compare the Jesus in it with the Jesus of the original film or; better yet, of the written Gospel of Luke. You decide. Does it do them justice?

With respect to the values of Citizens Project, I believe that the way this film has been cut and the way it is being used should raise concerns. When one carefully compares the original film with the abridged video, it is readily apparent that what gets cut are those portions of Luke's Gospel involving the social, political, economic and apocalyptic dimensions of the salvation Jesus proclaims (Luke 4:16-24, 28-30; 6:24-26; 8:16-21; 9:27; 12:33-34; 17:20-21; 19:41-44; 20:9-19; 23:27-28, 31). Not surprisingly, what is left in is more compatible with Campus Crusade's individualistic view of salvation—one that primarily reduces everything to an individual's personal relationship to Jesus.

As important as that is (for me also), it is only one part of Luke's powerful witness of who Jesus is for the individuals and societies of his time and ours. A number of the cuts from the original film are of passages basic to Lukes' particular way of witnessing Jesus' radical challenge to any society that makes the values of conventional wisdom—family, wealth, honor and religion— into idols. I would argue that these are precisely some of the more relevant and challenging parts of Luke that need to be proclaimed to the Colorado Springs area right now. By leaving these parts out, the people who hear this witness are not challenged to reconsider where they might be making some of today's conventional wisdom about family values, consumerism, religion, and nationalism into idols and then, going even farther, trying to impose them on everyone else in our diverse society through political power and laws. While this evangelistic tool does not directly propose this, it does leave the door open to it. For me, that represents a danger in our present religious climate.

— Rev. Keith Thompson

CP Response: Demonstrating Tolerance

Citizens Project has been asked by a number of people for our response to the Jesus Video Saturation Project. What values does it reflect? How might I respond if someone comes to my door?

In maintaining our commitment to pluralism, it's important to respect the rights of those distributing the videos to share their values with others. But recognizing the multiplicity of spiritual values in our community means that those distributing the videos should be equally respectful of the rights and values of those they visit.

We have some reason to be concerned that such respect might be lacking. The letter signed by the project's coordinators describes non-Christians as being "people adrift (with) no moral or ethical behavior." In addition, New Life Church's monthly newsletter describes this project as "an incredible opportunity...(to) win our city for Jesus." Such comments suggest an "our morality or no morality" sentiment which may further divide our community.

However, these visits into our homes can be opportunities to question the visitors as to the goals of the project, the values it reflects, and its implications for a diverse community. It can also be an opportunity to share your values, whether based in Christianity, Judaism, Paganism, Buddhism, Atheism, Islam or other belief systems.

The Jesus Video Saturation Project presents us with the opportunity to start an honest dialogue on spiritual, religious and philosophical values that can increase tolerance and challenge disrespect for the differing paths in our community. It can also help foster understanding while encouraging us to reflect upon our city's rich diversity.

Announcements

❑ **"Spirituality and Religion" Symposium Set for January.** Colorado College has lined up an impressive slate of social critics, novelists, poets, writers, advocates, and artists to explore some important questions about spirituality and religion. Mark your calendars early—January 19-22, 1994—this seminar promises to be an engaging and provocative three and a half days.

❑ **Food Bank Assists People Living with AIDS.** Monarch House Group, Inc., working with Share Colorado Self Help & Resource Exchange needs personal care items, non-perishable foods, cleaning supplies, household sundries, financial contributions and anything else you can think of to provide to people living with AIDS and their loved ones here in El Paso County. To contribute, watch for FOOD BANK FOR PLWA'S boxes around town, or call Monarch house at 634-0133 to arrange for pickup at your convenience.

❑ **Attention 80906 Neighborhood Group**. The next meeting of the 80906 Neighborhood Group will be December 12 at 6:00 p.m. at Judi Ellias-Ochs' house. For more information please contact Julie at 630-1466.

❑ **Public Television Analyzes Amendment 2.** Southern Colorado's KTSC-TV is scheduling a special line-up of programs dealing with Amendment 2. On Friday, November 19th beginning at 7 p.m., KTSC will broadcast a Bill Moyers Journal, The New Holy War. This hour-long documentary takes an in-depth look at the division over gay rights in Colorado Springs, and includes a special look at Citizens Project. Following the Moyers special will be a live broadcast of a town meeting with a panel discussion of Amendment 2. After the live town meeting, the next two hours will feature four documentaries on Amendment 2-related issues: Gay Rights in Colorado: The Uncivil War, Gay Rights/ Special Rights, Ground Zero Goes To Washington and the Gay Agenda. Don't miss this packed evening of programming on PBS.

❑ **Program Addresses Gay Stereotypes.** Colorado Springs Cablevision will air Sacred Lies/Civil Truths, a production of Testing the Limits, on Tuesday November 16 and the following Tuesday, November 23 at 9 p.m. on cable channel 9. The hour-long video is a response to the myths and stereotypes forwarded in campaign literature and anti-gay productions like the Gay Agenda.

GETTING INVOLVED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Perhaps you've been itching to help the public schools because it's such a worthy cause, or perhaps the recent school board elections have reminded you that you'd like to know how the public school system works. It may even be that you've read all of those Letters to the Editor decrying the sad state of public education and you'd like to see if they're true.

Well, you can!

First, a little about how the public schools work. For the purpose of public education, the state of Colorado is divided into a number of school districts. Each public school district is managed by an elected board of directors, known as the Board of Education or, commonly, as the "school board." The school board establishes all of the policies for the district and hires a superintendent to run the district's infrastructure. The superintendent reports to the board and is typically expected to make recommendations to the board regarding any and all aspects of the district's operation. The school board operates in accordance with public law, state school board policies, and its own policies (which, of course, it may change). When a school board recognizes a need for special expertise, community input/influence, or extra information-gathering manpower, it will often establish advisory committees. Such committees may be formed for strategic planning, standards development, curriculum review, policy review, school site planning, finance, technology, transportation, and so on.

> "There are many ways in which you can contribute to your public schools."

In addition to these locally-established committees, the state of Colorado has mandated that each school district must have a district accountability advisory committee, which advises the district board on the efficiency and adequacy of the district's educational programs. Each school in the district is also represented by a state-mandated school building accountability advisory committee, which provides input to the district accountability committee. The membership and terms of these committees are decided by the district, except that the district accountability committee must have at least one parent, one teacher, one school administrator, and one non-parent taxpayer.

So how can you play a part?

You can be an in-school volunteer. Many schools accept classroom assistance and administrative support from parents and other community members. Contact the school in which you'd like to volunteer. The school's parent-teacher organization (PTO) will typically also welcome your help, whether or not you fit the "parent-teacher" description. You should be able to get PTO contact information from the school as well.

You can become an advisory committee member. Contact the district superintendent's office for details on district committee memberships and one or more of your local schools for details on building accountability membership. Be aware that school districts differ in their enthusiasm for accountability committees, so you may need to convince them of your value to a certain committee and your right to be on it.

You can become a school board member. In order to do this, of course, you must either be elected to a school board position for a given term of office or be selected to fill a position vacated by a board member prior to the end of her/his elected term. To be eligible for school board membership, you must be a registered voter and reside in the school district. School board elections are currently held in November of odd-numbered years. The number of school board members and the length of their terms vary from district to district; typically only about half of a school board's positions are up for election at a time. If you wish to be considered for election to the school board, you must file a petition with the district, and if you want your name on the ballot, the petition must be accompanied by the signatures of 50 registered voters in the district. Contact the district superintendent's office for details on this process.

You can be an observer. Under Colorado law, the meetings of the school board and its subcommittees are public, except when specific personnel matters are handled. Look in local newspapers and school newsletters for meeting times, places, and agendas or contact the district superintendent's office for that information. School boards have different policies on comments from the audience during school board meetings, but, in general, you should let the superintendent's office know that you would like to speak at a board meeting at least 24 hours prior to that meeting. Naturally, you can also contact school board members individually to express your opinion(s). Another opportunity for you is to read the district accountability committee's mandatory report to the public; this report may be distributed directly to you or it may be printed in a local newspaper.

As you can see, there are many ways in which you can contribute to your public schools. The telephone numbers for all local schools and school districts are in the telephone book under SCHOOLS-PUBLIC. The Citizens Project Schools Network is also available as a resource, and for further information on schools.

—Julie Willis

Overheard

"Multiculturalism is an across-the-board assault on our Anglo-Saxon heritage. Our Culture is superior to others...Robert Frost will be remembered when Maya Angelou is forgotten."

— Pat Buchanan
in a speech to the Christian Coalition

News Briefs

Cultural Diversity Class

School District 11 has prepared a class about cultural diversity. This class, for teachers and others who work with children, will be held January 12-13 at West Center for Intergenerational Studies. Cost will be $30 (with an additional charge if UCCS credit is desired).
For more information, contact Jan Mariner at 520-2039.

Girl Scouts and God

The official pledge of the Girl Scouts has been changed to allow girls to substitute whatever word they believe is appropriate for "God." According to one Girl Scout delegate, the change is designed to show that "Girl Scouts are an inclusive organization, and the idea is that we are across all lines—not just focusing on one group or religion or race." Tom Minnery of Focus on the Family expressed concern: "This is one more organization that has become morally relativistic, and that's deeply disappointing,."

School Voucher Proposal

Steve Durham, a former Republican state lawmaker from Colorado Springs, has filed and now withdrawn a ballot proposal called "Parental Choice in Education." Durham withdrew the measure November 2, and it may be in response to early indications of California's sound defeat (see "A Big No For Vouchers") of a voucher initiative, Proposition 174. Under Durham's original plan, students would get state-funded "scholarships" for use at a school of their choice. Each scholarship would be based on the state average per-pupil expenditure. Watch for a substitute initiative in 1994.

Another Voice in the Springs

A welcome addition to Colorado Springs arrived in October. *The Independent,* which offers a fresh look at local and national issues, is available every Wednesday (outlets are all over the city and at the CP office) and on Thursdays as an insert in *The Denver Post.* Make sure you take a check out this new voice in the Pikes Peak region.

A Big No For Vouchers

California's Proposition 174, a school voucher initiative, went down to defeat earlier this month with 70 percent against and 30 percent in favor. Despite defeat, supporters promise more to come. "...We've educated people as to the issue and it's not going away," said one Kern County, CA proponent. In California, as in other states nation-wide, papers have been filed for the 1994 ballot.

Springs' Baptisms Not Very Christian

When Cornerstone Baptist Church and Bellevue Baptist Church used free parties and pizza to get young people to attend their revivals, they may have crossed a line. It's a question of tactics, according to Edward Hayes, president of Denver Baptist Seminary. "Christians shouldn't use deception to gain a hearing for the Gospel," he said in an interview with the Rocky Mountain News. Cornerstone's pastor Dean Miller is unrepentant, saying "We plan to do it (the carnival) again," but he adds "we may be a little more cautious to get every parent to sign the (consent) form..."

Diversity In the Workplace

The 9th annual Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action conference held in Colorado Springs was a success, drawing participants from all over the United States. The conference, entitled "Challenges of Diversity - A Call for Action," featured several local figures including Dr. Ken Burnley, Superintendent of District 11, and Dr. Gerald Trigg, Senior Minister of First United Methodist Church. Other workshops included "Managing Diversity" and "Cultural Diversity - Guess Who's Coming to Work."

CFV Opens War Chest

Acting on his pledge to be "a resource in any way we can," for "group(s) fighting the battle the way we like it," Colorado for Family Values' Executive Director Kevin Tebedo confirmed that the organization had given $75,000 to an anti-gay rights effort in Cincinnati. The contribution represents more than half of the $147,000 collected by a group calling itself Equal Rights, Not Special Rights, according to campaign records filed in late October. When asked if CFV was opening its war chest for similar efforts elsewhere, Tebedo responded saying that he doesn't want "everybody in the world to know what we're doing." CFV's money appears to have been utilized, as voters in Cincinnati approved a local anti-gay rights ordinance.

Putting Christ Back into Public Schools

The November *Focus on the Family* magazine contains an article showing how readers can encourage public school teachers to "legally teach about Christ's birth" and not be concerned about the "supposed separation of church and state." Simply get this special 8-page Christmas card to send to your favorite teacher, principal, or school board member. The card quotes from favorable court cases and includes sample lesson plans to show public school children the "real reason behind the season and bring the joy of Christmas into the classroom." The cards come from Gateways to a Better Education, in Lake Forest, California.

I AGREE! We must promote increased tolerance and compassion for others in our community. I want to join the thousands of concerned residents who joined Citizens Project to stay informed and to challenge intolerant activities.

[ ] Please add my name to your mailing list. I look forward to receiving Freedom Watch, the Citizens Project Newsletter.

[ ] I have enclosed a contribution in support of your mission and to help offset the cost of printing and mailing. Here is a check for:

[ ] $20 [ ] $35 [ ] $50 [ ] $100 Other $ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Please return to: Citizen's Project, Box 2085, Colorado Springs, CO 80901
Because we lobby to protect civil liberties, contributions are not tax-deductible.

Citizens Project
Phone (719) 520-9899
Fax (719) 520-0118

Our Mission: *Citizens Project is a grassroots organization in the Pikes Peak region dedicated to upholding the traditional American values of pluralism, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state.*

Our Vision: *We envision a community committed to working beyond ignorance, prejudice and fear where differences are respected, individual rights are protected and diversity is celebrated.*

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Wishing you and yours
the warmest of
Holiday Greetings
and
Best Wishes
for a Safe and
Happy New Year!
~ from All of Us at
Citizens Project

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Freedom Watch
HIGHLIGHTS
- ❑ The Supreme Court & Religious Liberty
- ❑ Getting Involved in Public Schools